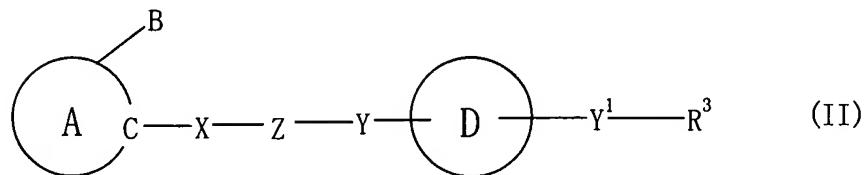


### Amendments to the Claims

**1-8. (Cancelled)**

**9. (Original)** A compound represented by the formula



wherein

ring A is a 5-membered aromatic heterocycle containing 2 or more nitrogen atoms, which may further have substituent(s);

B is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

X is a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group;

Z is -O-, -S-, -NR<sup>2</sup>-, -CONR<sup>2</sup>- or -NR<sup>2</sup>CO- (R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group);

Y and Y<sup>1</sup> are the same or different and each is a bond or a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group; and

D is a ring optionally further having substituent(s);

R<sup>3</sup> is an optionally substituted acyl group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is imidazole, then Z should not be -O-,

and provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is pyrazole, X is methylene, Z is -S- and Y is a bond, then the ring represented by D should not be oxadiazole,

or a salt thereof.

**10. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is a pyrazole, oxadiazole, thiadiazole, triazole or tetrazole ring.

**11. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein the optionally substituted acyl group represented by R<sup>3</sup> is a group of the formula: -SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>4</sup>, -SOR<sup>4</sup> or -PO<sub>3</sub>R<sup>4</sup>R<sup>5</sup> wherein R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group or a heterocyclic group, and R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> may form a heterocycle together with the adjacent oxo-substituted phosphorus atom and two oxygen atoms.

**12. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is a pyrazole ring.

**13. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein B is an optionally substituted aromatic hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted aromatic heterocyclic group.

**14. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein X is a divalent C<sub>1-8</sub> aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

**15. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein Z is -CONR<sup>2</sup>- (R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group).

**16. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein Y is a bond or a C<sub>1-4</sub> alkylene.

**17. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein Y<sup>1</sup> is a bond or a C<sub>1-4</sub> alkylene.

**18. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, wherein the ring represented by D is a C<sub>6-14</sub> aromatic hydrocarbon ring.

**19. (Original)** The compound of claim 9, which is diethyl [4-((2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]prop-2-enoyl}amino)benzyl]phosphonate; (2E)-N-{4-[(2,4-dioxo-1,3-thiazolidin-5-yl)methyl]phenyl}-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acrylamide;

(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-[4-(1H-imidazol-1-ylmethyl)phenyl]acrylamide;

(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-[4-(1H-pyrazol-1-ylmethyl)phenyl]acrylamide;

diethyl [4-({(2E)-3-[1-methyl-5-(2-thienyl)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]prop-2-enoyl}amino)benzyl]phosphonate;

(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-{4-[(3-methyl-2,4-dioxo-1,3-thiazolidin-5-yl)methyl]phenyl}acrylamide;

(2E)-N-[4-(1H-benzimidazol-1-ylmethyl)phenyl]-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acrylamide;

(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-{4-[(methylsulfonyl)methyl]phenyl}acrylamide;

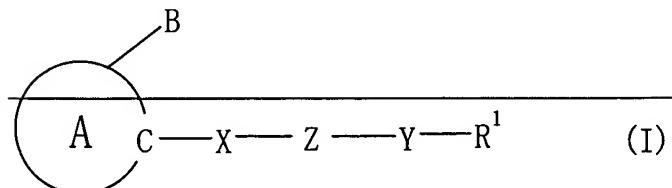
(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-{4-[hydroxy(2-pyridinyl)methyl]phenyl}acrylamide;

(2E)-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]-N-[4-(4-morpholinylmethyl)phenyl]acrylamide; or

(2E)-N-{4-[(ethylsulfonyl)methyl]phenyl}-3-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acrylamide.

**20. (Original)** A pharmaceutical agent comprising the compound of claim 9 or a prodrug thereof.

**21. (Currently amended)** A method for preventing or treating neuropathy in a mammal, which comprises administering a compound represented by the formula:



wherein

~~ring A is a 5-membered aromatic heterocycle containing 2 or more nitrogen atoms, which may further have substituent(s);~~

~~B~~ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

~~X~~ is a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group;

~~Z~~ is ~~O~~, ~~S~~, ~~NR<sup>2</sup>~~, ~~CONR<sup>2</sup>~~ or ~~NR<sup>2</sup>CO~~ (~~R<sup>2</sup>~~ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group);

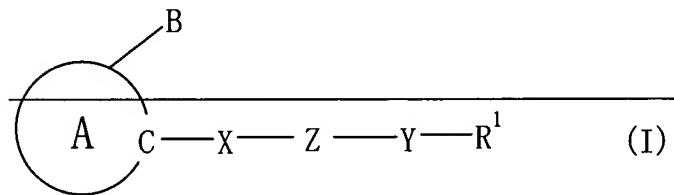
~~Y~~ is a bond or a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group; and

~~R<sup>1</sup>~~ is an optionally substituted cyclic group, an optionally substituted amino group or an optionally substituted acyl group,

provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is imidazole, then Z should not be O,

or a salt thereof, the compound of claim 9 to said mammal.

**22. (Currently amended)** A method for promoting production or secretion of a neurotrophic factor in a mammal, which comprises administering a compound represented by the formula:



wherein

ring A is a 5-membered aromatic heterocycle containing 2 or more nitrogen atoms, which may further have substituent(s);

~~B~~ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

~~X~~ is a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group;

~~Z~~ is ~~O~~, ~~S~~, ~~NR<sup>2</sup>~~, ~~CONR<sup>2</sup>~~ or ~~NR<sup>2</sup>CO~~ (~~R<sup>2</sup>~~ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group);

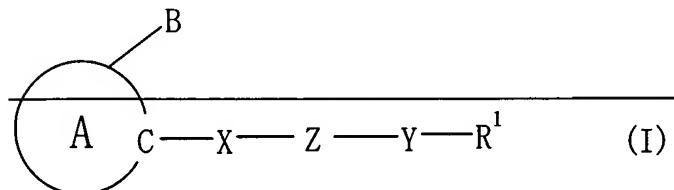
~~Y~~ is a bond or a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group; and

~~R<sup>1</sup>~~ is an optionally substituted cyclic group, an optionally substituted amino group or an optionally substituted acyl group,

provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is imidazole, then Z should not be O,

or a salt thereof, the compound of claim 9 to said mammal.

**23. (Currently amended)** A method for ameliorating pain in a mammal, which comprises administering ~~a compound represented by the formula:~~



wherein

~~ring A is a 5-membered aromatic heterocycle containing 2 or more nitrogen atoms, which may further have substituent(s);~~

~~B is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;~~

~~X is a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group;~~

~~Z is O, S, NR<sup>2</sup>, CONR<sup>2</sup> or NR<sup>2</sup>CO (R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group);~~

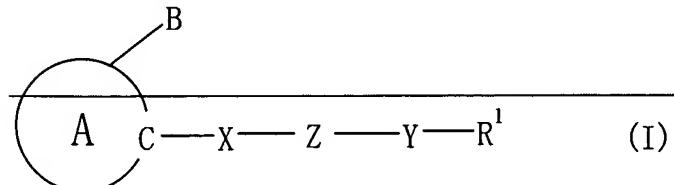
~~Y is a bond or a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group; and~~

~~R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted cyclic group, an optionally substituted amino group or an optionally substituted acyl group;~~

~~provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is imidazole, then Z should not be O;~~

or a salt thereof, the compound of claim 9 to said mammal.

**24. (Currently amended)** A method for protecting a nerve in a mammal, which comprises administering ~~a compound represented by the formula:~~



wherein

ring A is a 5-membered aromatic heterocycle containing 2 or more nitrogen atoms, which may further have substituent(s);

B is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

X is a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group;

Z is O, S, NR<sup>2</sup>, CONR<sup>2</sup> or NR<sup>2</sup>CO (R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group);

Y is a bond or a divalent acyclic hydrocarbon group; and

R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted cyclic group, an optionally substituted amino group or an optionally substituted acyl group,

provided that when the 5-membered aromatic heterocycle represented by ring A is imidazole, then Z should not be O,

or a salt thereof, the compound of claim 9 to said mammal.

**25-30. (Cancelled)**